

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
NINETY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 480

Introduced by Schimek, 27; Beutler, 28; Dierks, 40; Hudkins, 21;
Preister, 5; Robak, 22; Stuhr, 24; Suttle, 10;
Thompson, 14; Price, 26

Read first time January 14, 1999

Committee: Health and Human Services

A BILL

- 1 FOR AN ACT relating to women's health; to create the Women's Health
- 2 Initiative of Nebraska; to create a council and a fund;
- 3 and to provide duties.
- 4 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. The Women's Health Initiative of Nebraska is
2 created within the Department of Health and Human Services. The
3 Women's Health Initiative of Nebraska shall strive to improve the
4 health of women in Nebraska by fostering the development of a
5 comprehensive system of coordinated services, policy development,
6 advocacy, and education. The initiative shall:

7 (1) Serve as a clearinghouse for information regarding
8 women's health issues, including pregnancy, breast and cervical
9 cancers, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, osteoporosis,
10 menopause, heart disease, smoking, and mental health issues as well
11 as other issues that impact women's health, including substance
12 abuse, domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, sexual assault,
13 adequacy of health insurance, access to primary and preventative
14 health care, and rural and ethnic disparities in health outcomes;

15 (2) Perform strategic planning within the Department of
16 Health and Human Services, the Department of Health and Human
17 Services Regulation and Licensure, and the Department of Health and
18 Human Services Finance and Support to develop department-wide plans
19 for implementation of goals and objectives for women's health;

20 (3) Conduct department-wide policy analysis on specific
21 issues related to women's health;

22 (4) Coordinate pilot projects and planning projects
23 funded by the state that are related to women's health;

24 (5) Communicate and disseminate information and perform a
25 liaison function within the departments and to providers of health,
26 social, educational, and support services to women;

27 (6) Provide technical assistance to communities, other
28 public entities, and private entities for initiatives in women's

1 health, including but not limited to, community health assessment
2 and strategic planning and identification of sources of funding and
3 assistance with writing of grants; and

4 (7) Encourage innovative responses by public and private
5 entities that are attempting to address women's health issues.

6 Sec. 2. (1) The Women's Health Initiative Council is
7 created and shall consist of not more than thirty members, at least
8 three-fourths of whom are women. At least one member shall be
9 appointed from the following disciplines: (1) An
10 obstetrician/gynecologist; (2) a nurse practitioner from a rural
11 community; (3) a geriatrics physician or nurse; (4) a pediatrician;
12 (5) a community public health representative from each
13 congressional district; (6) a health educator; (7) an insurance
14 industry representative; (8) a mental health professional; (9) a
15 representative from a statewide health volunteer agency; (10) a
16 private health care industry representative; (11) an epidemiologist
17 or a health statistician; (12) a foundation representative; and
18 (13) a woman who is a health care consumer from each of the
19 following age categories: Eighteen to thirty; thirty-one to forty;
20 forty-one to sixty-five; and sixty-six and older. The membership
21 shall also include a representative of the University of Nebraska
22 Medical Center, a representative from Creighton Medical School, the
23 executive director of the Nebraska Commission on the Status of
24 Women or his or her designee, the chief medical officer of the
25 Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure,
26 and the Title V Director of the Department of Health and Human
27 Services.

28 (2) The Governor shall appoint council members and shall

1 consider and attempt to balance representation based on political
2 party affiliation, race, and different geographical areas of
3 Nebraska when making appointments. The Governor shall appoint the
4 first chairperson and vice-chairperson of the council. There shall
5 be two ex officio, nonvoting members from the Legislature, one of
6 which shall be the chairperson of the Health and Human Services
7 Committee. The executive director of the Women's Health
8 Initiative of Nebraska shall also be an ex officio, nonvoting
9 member.

10 (3) The terms of the initial members shall be as follows:
11 One-third shall serve for a one-year term, one-third shall serve
12 for two-year terms, and one-third shall serve for three-year terms
13 including the members designated chairperson and vice-chairperson.
14 Thereafter members shall serve for a three-year term. Members may
15 not serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.

16 (4) The Governor shall make the appointments within three
17 months after the effective date of this act.

18 (5) The council shall meet quarterly the first two years.
19 After this time the council shall meet at least every six months or
20 upon the call of the chairperson or a majority of the voting
21 members. A quorum shall be one-half of the voting members.

22 (6) The members of the commission shall be reimbursed for
23 their actual and necessary expenses as provided in sections 81-1174
24 to 81-1177 and pursuant to policies of the council.

25 (7) The council shall advise the Women's Health
26 Initiative of Nebraska in carrying out its duties under section 1
27 of this act and may solicit private funds to support the
28 initiative.

1 Sec. 3. The Director of Health and Human Services shall
2 hire an executive director for the Women's Health Initiative of
3 Nebraska. The Director of Health and Human Services and the
4 executive director may employ personnel necessary to carry out the
5 powers and duties of the initiative. The Governor's Policy
6 Research Office, the Department of Health and Human Services
7 Finance and Support, the Department of Health and Human Services
8 Regulation and Licensure, and the Department of Health and Human
9 Services and other state agencies as necessary may provide
10 administrative and technical support under the direct supervision
11 of the Governor. The initiative may secure cooperation and
12 assistance of other appropriate government and private-sector
13 entities for women's health issues, programs, and educational
14 materials.

15 Sec. 4. The Legislature recognizes the generosity of its
16 citizens and charitable organizations that donate their time and
17 money to provide funds to their fellow citizens. It is the intent
18 of the Legislature to permit the Women's Health Initiative of
19 Nebraska to obtain and expend such funds to carry out the purposes
20 of sections 1 to 7 of this act. Private citizens and charitable
21 organizations may donate and grant funds to the Women's Health
22 Initiative of Nebraska to pay for programs, educational materials,
23 promotions, and other activities undertaken by the initiative.

24 Sec. 5. The Women's Health Initiative Fund is created.
25 The fund shall consist of money received as gifts or grants or
26 collected as fees or charges from any federal, state, public, or
27 private source. Money in the fund shall be used to reimburse the
28 expenses of the Women's Health Initiative of Nebraska and expenses

1 of members of the Women's Health Initiative Council. Any money in
2 the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state
3 investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act
4 and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

5 Sec. 6. The Women's Health Initiative of Nebraska shall
6 have all powers necessary to implement the purposes and intent of
7 sections 1 to 7 of this act, including applying for, receiving, and
8 administering federal and other public and private funds deposited
9 in the Women's Health Initiative Fund. Any funds obtained for the
10 Women's Health Initiative of Nebraska shall be remitted to the
11 State Treasurer for credit to the Women's Health Initiative Fund.

12 Sec. 7. The Women's Health Initiative of Nebraska shall
13 issue an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature on
14 September 1 for the preceding fiscal year's activities of the
15 initiative. The report shall include progress reports on any
16 programs, activities, or educational promotions that were
17 undertaken by the initiative. The report shall also include a
18 status report on women's health in Nebraska and any results
19 achieved by the initiative.